

Inside Wallops

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NASA Announces Name Change for Balloon Facility

NASA has officially changed the name of the National Scientific Balloon Facility (NSBF) in Palestine, Texas, to the Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility.

Rep. Jeb Hensarling, (R-Texas), proposed the name change to the House Committee on Science on April 26, 2005, as a reminder of what the crew of the Space Shuttle Columbia stood for: honor, bravery and the quest for knowledge for generations to come.

"This tribute to the crew of the Space Shuttle Columbia is in recognition of the dedication and sacrifice made by those brave individuals willing to risk their lives to further humanity's knowledge about space exploration," said Vernon Jones, NASA's senior scientist for suborbital research at NASA's Science Mission Directorate, which manages the facility.

On February 1, 2003, the Columbia and crew were lost over the western United States during re-entry into Earth's atmosphere. The 28th and final flight of Columbia (STS-107) was a 16-day mission dedicated to research in physical, life and space sciences.

The Balloon Facility was established in 1961 by the National Science Foundation in Boulder, Colo. The facility was moved to Palestine in 1963 and was formally

named the National Scientific Balloon Facility in January 1973.

In 1982, sponsorship of the NSBF was transferred to NASA. In October 1987, NASA awarded a contract to New Mexico State University's Physical Science Laboratory, Las Cruces, N.M., to provide engineering and launch support for the agency's Scientific Balloon Program and for oversight of NSBF operations.

The NSBF provides complete balloon operation services and engineering support to the scientific community in the United States and several foreign countries.

Operation services include inflating and launching the balloon, tracking and recovery of the payload, tele-command and data retrieval. Engineering support includes design of balloon systems, research in balloon materials, and electronics' design.

The facility has launched more than 1,700 balloons for 35 universities, 23 research



agencies, and 33 foreign groups. Payloads up to 5,000 pounds are routinely flown on balloons of up to 40 million cubic feet in volume at altitudes exceeding 20 miles. Flight time varies from several hours to several weeks. Seventy-four on-site contract employees work at the facility and support NASA's international balloon operations.

NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility manages the scientific balloon program for the agency's Science Mission Directorate.

Wallops Shorts.....

Range Activity on the Airport

Flights with NASA's 757 aircraft from Langley Research Center will be conducted on Tuesday and Thursday. Tests will continue in the Radar, Enhanced and Synthetic Vision Systems Integrated Technology Evaluation. For further information contact John Valiant at x1422.

Launch

A NASA scientific balloon was launched from Ft. Sumner, N.M., on August 28.

The 29.47 million cubic foot balloon was an engineering test flight for the Antarctic Impulsive Transient Antenna (ANITA) long duration balloon payload.

ANITA is a radio telescope array designed to use the Antarctic continent as a detector to search for radio emissions from ultra-high energy cosmic ray neutrino interactions within the ice sheet.

Dr. Peter Gorham, University of Hawaii, was the principal investigator. Total flight time was 4 hours, 13 minutes.

In the news

Palestine Herald-Press
"NASA OKs Name Change for NSBF"

Eastern Shore News
"NASA Wallops to Mark 60th Year; Pilots Invited to Fly in for Event"

NACA — NASA

Wallops 60th Anniversary

Long familiar to us, Wallops must seem a strange name to those that see or hear it for the first time.

It has an English background as the name of a place and a family name. The Wallops shield dates back to medieval times. John Wallop, of Farley Wallop in Hampshire, was created Baron Wallop by King George I, after he had served as lord of the treasury, and George II made him Earl of Portsmouth.

On the Eastern Shore of Virginia, the name has been established since at least the 1660's when John Wallop began patenting land here. The Island, a road, a mill pond, a branch, a neck of land, a marsh and a hunt club have borne his name.

Col. Edmund Scarborough, surveyor-general of Virginia, appointed John Wallop, Deputy Surveyor in 1664, "to survey all Accomack County Lands."

Wallops was the same man who laid out Port Scarborough (now Onancock) and Lankford Highway (U.S. Route 13) from the Virginia/Maryland state line to Zion Church, north of Parksley, Va. For almost 200 years it was called Wallops' Road in the Accomack County records.

The island obtained its name over 300 years ago from John Wallop who was granted a patent in 1672. Formerly, the Island had been called "Keeckotank," "Accocomoson" and "Occocomoson".

One of the oldest launch ranges in the world, Wallops has been conducting rocketborne experiments for 60 years. The

first research rocket, a 17-foot Tiamat, was launched July 4, 1945. (A full-scale Tiamat is on display in the Visitor Center.)

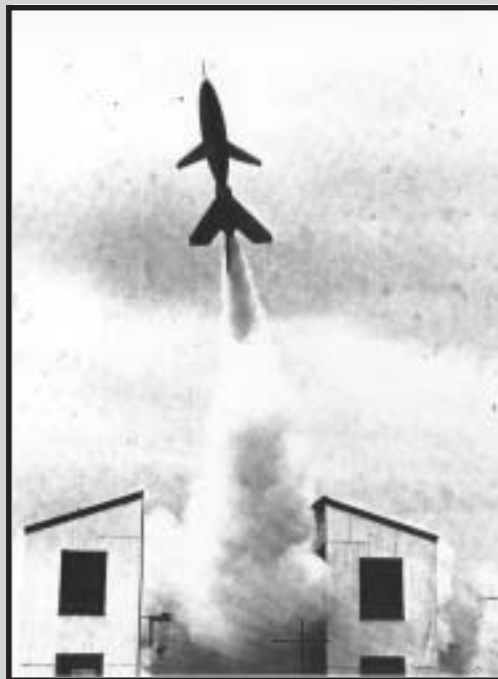
What we know as NASA's Wallops Flight Facility began as the Pilotless Aircraft Research Station under NASA's predecessor agency – the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). As part of the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory, Wallops retained that name from 1945 until 1958.

In 1958, the Wallops facility became an independent station when NASA came into existence and was known as Wallops Station until 1974.

Wallops obtained Center status in 1974 – the Wallops Flight Center – until 1981

when it was consolidated with the NASA Goddard Flight Center and has been known as the GSFC/Wallops Flight Facility since then.

The Wallops facility covers 6,166 acres including about 1,100 acres of marshland, the mainland in back of Wallops Island and the Main Base. The launch range located on Wallops Island is about 5 ½ miles long and ½ mile wide at its widest point. Long range radars and optical tracking sites are located on the mainland just across from the Island. The Main Base is located about seven miles to the northwest of the Island and is where the Range Control Center, research airport, engineering and administrative offices, telemetry receiving station and technical shops are located.



The first experimental vehicle launched from Wallops Island on July 4, 1945 – the Tiamat (left) – was part of a project for developmental testing of the Air Forces' first air-to-air missile. The first launching was conducted to verify the booster and the launch system.

Soon after World War I ended, the original purpose of this project was changed from development for combat use to research on automatic control systems. The vehicles tested at Wallops contained all the elements of an actual missile except a warhead and a guidance system. A booster was developed for ground launching and, in effect, gave the Tiamat the capability for use as a ground-to-air missile in addition to its original intended use for air-to-air launching.

NASA Photo

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Construction Cam Corner

Last Week On the Site:

There is still no activity at the site.

Next Week On the Site: No planned activity. The new date for the beginning of site and clearing work to begin is Sept. 6, 2005. Enjoy those last days of summer without the sound of back-up beepers.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Wallops 60th Anniversary Open House is October 1, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If your organization or project would like to exhibit, contact Cheryl Outten at x1714 or Denise Gramlich at x1480 by September 9.

Inside Wallops is an official publication of Goddard Space Flight Center and is published by the Wallops Office of Public Affairs, Extension 1584, in the interest of Wallops employees. Recent and past issues of *Inside Wallops* also may be found on the NASA Wallops Flight Facility homepage: www.wff.nasa.gov

Editor
Asst. Editor

Betty Flowers
Rebecca Hudson